

**MINUTES OF THE SPECIAL PUBLIC MEETING OF THE UTAH COUNTY COMMISSION SEPTEMBER 1, 2015 AT THE WESTERN PARK 302 EAST 200 SOUTH, VERNAL, UTAH. MEETING COMMENCED AT 10:09 AM.**

**PARTICIPANTS:** COMMISSIONERS BILL STRINGER, MARK RAYMOND AND MICHAEL MCKEE, CHAIR.

**ATTENDANCE:** TROY LUPCHO, BILL ZIMMERMAN, DAN MORTENSEN, BRAD HORROCKS, SHIRLEY SMUIN, HAL HATCH, WAYNE JONES, RYAN JONES, CATHY MASSEY, JODI SCOTT, GREG GILROY, JANEAN LEKAS, JIM LEKAS, KAM POPE, PAM CLINCH, RANDY BEERS, KIM ZUNIGA, BRYAN MEIER, BRANDON WOODS, TRESSA WOODS, DONETT HIATT, SCOTT HIATT, CAROL WILSON, VICKIE BOREN ANDERSON, BRANDON PACK, JOE EVANS, BRAD HAFEN, ANDY FUCHS, GAYLE WHITMIRE, RICK REYNOLDS, DEAN BAKER, CURT SMUIN, PETE CAMPBELL, KELLY BOREN, MARK MASON, BEN CLUFF, ROBIN O'DRISCOLL, LELA WILSON, MICHAEL WILKINS, LOUIS SIMMONS, JILL CASE, GEOFF LIESIK, DAVE RASMUSSEN, BECKY VALDEZ, TALITHA VALDEZ, MAX SEARLE, CHUCK WEAVER, WENDI LONG, BARBARA SIMPER, STACY WISEMAN, TERRY GLASS, JOE WISEMAN, BRETT WILKINS, DEVIN COOK, DENISE SWINK, LANA LACORE, ERIC WALGREN, TONY KAZECK, DENNIS HATCH, BOB BARNHILL, MATT CAZIER, TAMMY MCKEE, BJ PETERS, BRYCE PICKETT, JORDAN MERRELL, SHAD SMITH, FELICIA COOK, MICHELLE BRISTOL, JOHN BRADFORD, CINDY SHOPE, LARRY SHOPE, JOSHUA BAKE, STEPHEN HENDERSON, SYMONE MASSEY, MIKE GARDINER, SONJA NORTON, BRENT GILLEY, SIDNEY SMITH, STEVE EVANS, MARILYN WALLIS, ANNETTE HAAKINSON, DAVID HAAKINSON, JANET ZUFELT, JOEL BROWN, BROCK SMITH, TAMMY MOORE, DENISE HACKEY, CHERYL MEIER, ORLAN ANDERSON, LANCE GARDNER, DAVE HANEY, KEN BASSETT, SUSAN HORROCKS, RULON DOUGLAS HAACKE, GALE RASMUSSEN, JENNIFER SPRUELL, TONY WAGNER, VAL SPRUELL, JESSE ATWOOD, JENNIFER ATWOOD, JORDAN MATHIS, ANNA BILLINGS, BART HASLEM, JON STEARMER, MIKE COOK, AND MANY OTHERS.

MINUTES RECORDED BY TAI BRUCKNER

## **WELCOME**

### **DISCUSSION REGARDING THE ASHLEY VALLEY ENERGY ROUTE (AVER)**

THE COMMISSIONERS BEGAN BY GIVING SOME HISTORY ABOUT THE ROUTE. COMMUNITY LEADERS APPROACHED THE COMMISSIONERS IN 2006 AND 2007 WITH CONCERNS ABOUT THE AMOUNT OF TRAFFIC IN VERNAL. THE TRANSPORTATION SPECIAL SERVICE DISTRICT (SSD) CONSENTED TO CONDUCT A STUDY. IT WAS DETERMINED TO HAVE MORE SUPPORT IF THE ROUTE WERE TO BE SOUTH OF TOWN, 6500 SOUTH. THIS ROUTE WOULD COST A SUBSTANTIAL AMOUNT OF MONEY. UNFORTUNATELY, MISINFORMATION IS COMMON WITH SUCH LARGE PROJECTS. THE ROUTE PRESENTED ON THE MAP IS THE ONLY ROUTE THE COMMISSION IS WILLING TO SUPPORT. CURRENTLY, THERE ARE NO PLANS TO COMPLETE THE ROUTE WEST OF BONANZA HIGHWAY. THE INTENTION IS TO OBTAIN THE RIGHT OF WAY AS A FUTURE OPTION. THIS PHASE GOES ACROSS BLM AND SITLA PROPERTIES AS WELL AS PRIVATE. THE BLM HAS HAD MEETINGS REGARDING THE PROPOSED ROUTE. THESE MEETINGS HAVE NOT BEEN TO DETERMINE IF THE ROUTE IS BENEFICIAL OR NOT BUT JUST PROVIDING OPTIONS FOR THE ROUTE. TIMES HAVE CHANGED AND FAR FEWER PEOPLE ARE IN VERNAL NOW. THE TECHNOLOGY FOR THE ENERGY INDUSTRY HAS CHANGED OVER THE YEARS AS WELL. FEWER DRILLING PADS ARE NEEDED. THE BLM IS DOING AN ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT. MUCH WILL BE LEARNED FROM THIS STUDY. MCCOY FLATS IS USED MUCH MORE NOW THAN IT EVER HAS BEEN. IT IS IMPORTANT TO PLAN FOR THE FUTURE RATHER THAN REACT TO SITUATIONS. THE COUNTY WILL BE TAKING A CLOSER LOOK AT THE TRANSPORTATION PLAN FOR THE VALLEY.

THE PLAN IS TO CONTINUE THE EAST PHASE. THE ROUTE WILL GO FROM THE INDUSTRIAL PARK ON HIGHWAY 40 TO STATE ROUTE 45, ABOUT 4.5 MILES. THE INTENTION OF THE EAST PHASE IS TO MOVE HEAVY TRUCK TRAFFIC OUT OF RESIDENTIAL AREAS. THE PERMANENT COMMUNITY IMPACT BOARD (CIB) AWARDED FUNDING, HALF GRANT AND HALF LOAN, FOR SUCH A PROJECT. IT IS A LOW INTEREST LOAN OVER 30 YEARS. THE GENERAL BUDGET WILL NOT CONTRIBUTE TO THESE FUNDS. THE EAST PHASE SHOULD BEGIN CONSTRUCTION IN 2016.

GARY SHOWALTER COMMENDED THE COMMISSIONERS FOR ALLOWING THIS MEETING. ADAM MASSEY, EXECUTIVE DIRECTOR OF THE TRANSPORTATION SSD IS ALSO IN ATTENDANCE TO ANSWER QUESTIONS. HE ASKED EACH SPEAKER TO BE SUCCINCT SO THE DISCUSSION CAN MOVE ALONG QUICKLY.

BART HASLEM WAS ASKED TO SPEAK IN REGARDS TO HAZARDOUS MATERIAL VEHICLES. HE HAS HAD A TRUCKING COMPANY HERE FOR 20 YEARS. IN BOOM TIMES HE HAS HAD AS MANY AS 200 TRUCKS. IN ALL THAT TIME HE HAS NEVER HAD MORE THAN TWO HAZMAT DRIVERS. THE STUDY DONE SAYS 75 TO 80% OF THE TRAFFIC CARRIES FLAMMABLE LIQUIDS. HE DOESN'T SEE THAT AS POSSIBLE. ADDITIONALLY, IN ALL THIS TIME HE HAS NEVER HAD AN ACCIDENT ON MAIN STREET. HE HAS ALSO BEEN ON THE VERNAL FIRE CREW FOR 15 YEARS. HE HAS NEVER RESPONDED TO A HAZMAT CALL ON MAIN STREET. THE AREA WHERE THE ROUTE IS TO CONNECT TO HIGHWAY 40 ON THE WEST SIDE IS NOT CONVENIENT AND WILL CAUSE PROBLEMS. IN HIS 15 YEARS ON THE FIRE CREW HE HAS RESPONDED TO ONE EXTRACTION ON MAIN STREET AND A DRIVER HAD FALLEN ASLEEP AND HIT A PARKED TRUCK. HOWEVER, THIS SPOT WHERE THE ROUTE IS TO CONNECT, HE HAS RESPONDED TO EIGHT. LAST NIGHT HE COUNTED 47 TRUCKS IN TWO HOURS. HE SAW ONE HAZARDOUS MATERIAL VEHICLE AND IT WAS SAVON PROPANE. THEY WILL CONTINUE TO USE MAIN STREET NOT THE ENERGY ROUTE.

COMMISSIONER STRINGER NOTED IF A TRUCK IS CARRYING MORE THAN 50 OR 100 GALLONS OF DIESEL IT IS CONSIDERED A HAZARDOUS MATERIAL CARRIER. HE ALSO NOTED IT IS IMPORTANT FOR EVERYONE TO UNDERSTAND THE DATA IN THE STUDY AND WHY IT IS BEING USED.

BILL ZIMMERMAN ADDRESSED THE MEETING. THE MAINTENANCE OF THE ROAD WILL AFFECT THE BUDGET. THE OIL AND GAS INDUSTRY IN VERNAL WILL BE DIFFERENT FROM NOW ON. WE WILL NO LONGER BE A CENTRAL HUB. MANY COMPANIES HAVE BUILT LARGE FACILITIES IN OTHER PLACES THAT WILL OVERLAP OUR AREA. THIS ISN'T HOW IT USED TO BE. HUNDREDS HAVE MOVED OUT OF OUR AREA. THE LOSS OF AIR SERVICE HAS COST US JOBS TOO. THE EXTRACTION COSTS IN OUR AREA ARE HIGHER THAN ANYWHERE ELSE. WE ARE NOT AS DIVERSIFIED AS WE ONCE WERE. IT WOULD BE SMART TO WAIT AWHILE TO DETERMINE IF IT IS NEEDED OR IF WE HAVE THE FUNDS. THE COUNTY HAS PLENTY OF DEBT: THE PUBLIC SAFETY COMPLEX, SEEP RIDGE ROAD AND THE CONFERENCE CENTER. WITHOUT THE OIL AND GAS INDUSTRY, THESE DEBTS WILL HAVE TO BE PAID WITH PROPERTY TAXES. THE AIRPORT IS ANOTHER ISSUE. EXTENDING THE EXISTING RUNWAY AND MOVE THE TAXI WAY AND HAVE THE IMPROVEMENTS DONE IN A FRACTION OF THE TIME THAT WOULD LAST FOR SEVERAL YEARS. WE SHOULD NOT ADD MORE DEBT, WE CAN'T PAY FOR. WE MUST LOOK AT THE BUDGETS, SLOW DOWN, AND SPEND MORE WISELY. WE COULD LOOSE BUSINESS ON THE WEST END OF TOWN TOO.

THE COMMISSIONERS TOOK A MOMENT TO RESPOND. THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT IS MANDATING SOME OF THE IMPROVEMENTS AT THE AIRPORT AND THEY HAVE THEIR OWN CRITERIA. FAA DENIED THE REQUEST TO SIMPLY EXTEND THE EXISTING RUNWAY. THE EXTRA EXPENSE OF THE NEW RUNWAY WOULD GIVE IT A LIFETIME OF AROUND 30 YEARS. SOMETIMES IT IS CHEAPER TO PUT UP THE FUNDS OURSELVES RATHER THAN FEDERAL FUNDING. FOR EXAMPLE, THE TRANSPORTATION SSD FOUND IT CHEAPER TO BUILD OUR OWN BRIDGES. OUR AIRPORT DOES NOT MEET THE STANDARDS AND THAT IS WHY WE LOST SKY WEST. THE CONFERENCE CENTER LOAN IS \$4.5 MILLION WITH 0% INTEREST OVER 30 YEARS. THE IMPACT MITIGATION SSD WILL BE MAKING THE PAYMENTS.

TROY LUPCHO, OWNER OF ALTITUDE CYCLE, ADDRESSED THE MEETING. HE IS HERE TO REPRESENT THE MCCOY FLAT BIKING TRAILS AND NORTHEASTERN UTAH MOUNTAIN BIKERS. THERE ARE 65 CUMULATIVE SINGLE TRACK BIKING TRAILS AT MCCOY FLATS. THE AREA IS ONLY 9.5 MILES FROM THE CENTER OF TOWN. THE PROPOSED ENERGY ROUTE WOULD GO THROUGH THE MIDDLE OF THE TRAIL SYSTEM. THIS SYSTEM WAS BUILT BY VOLUNTEERS OVER 20 YEARS. A TRAIL GUIDE WAS PUT

TOGETHER IN 2005 AND TAKEN TO THE BLM. THEY WERE TOLD TO STOP BUILDING TRAILS. NOW THE COALITION HAS WORKED WITH THE BLM TO DO A TRAIL INVENTORY. THE MCCOY FLATS SYSTEM HAS BEEN CONSIDERED THE BEST SYSTEM IN THE WEST, A RIVAL TO MOAB. IT IS AN AMAZING FACILITY. THE BLM HAS PUT IN SIGNAGE, RESTROOMS AND A PARKING LOT. THEY ARE TRYING TO FIGURE OUT HOW TO KEEP THE TRAILS AND CONFLICT TO A MINIMUM. HE HAS BEEN CONCERNED WITH THE LACK OF TRANSPARENCY IN THIS PROJECT. NOT ENOUGH INDIVIDUALS WERE AWARE OF THE OTHER ROUTE OPTIONS. LAST YEAR A PRESENTATION WAS GIVEN AT THE CHAMBER OF COMMERCE LUNCHEON REGARDING THE MCCOY FLATS TRAIL SYSTEM AND its BENEFITS TO UTAH COUNTY. 80% OF THE VEHICLES IN THE PARKING LOT IN PEAK SEASON ARE NOT FROM VERNAL AND MANY ARE NOT FROM UTAH. THE AVERAGE CYCLIST SPENDS THREE DAYS IN THE COMMUNITY. MCCOY FLATS GENERATES MORE REVENUE ON AN ANNUAL BASIS THAN THE 4<sup>TH</sup> OF JULY RODEO IN VERNAL. DAGGETT COUNTY RECENTLY FUNDED THE BUILDING OF A SINGLE TRACK AT \$40,000. THE COST OF THE FACILITY AT MCCOY FLATS WOULD BE AROUND \$500,000, CONSERVATIVELY. THIS HAS NOT BEEN A COST TO THE COMMUNITY. STEAMBOAT SPRINGS RECENTLY SPENT \$3.2 MILLION TO EXPAND RABBIT EARS PASS. OTHER COMMUNITIES WOULD LOVE TO HAVE WHAT WE HAVE. TROY RESPONDED TO A QUESTION ABOUT DEMOGRAPHICS. THE DEMOGRAPHICS OF MOUNTAIN BIKERS HAS NOT BEEN SET. AVERAGE, THE BIKERS RANGE FROM 23 TO 32 YEARS OLD BUT FAMILIES ARE BECOMING MORE INVOLVED. THIS IS THE SECOND MOST WIDELY USED BLM PROPERTY IN UTAH COUNTY; SECOND ONLY TO DOCS BEACH.

THE COMMISSIONERS APPRECIATE HIS ENTHUSIASM. THERE IS SOME CONCERN WITH THE DAMAGE TO NATURAL RESOURCES. THEY HAVE CREATED A GREAT RECREATIONAL AREA BUT THEY SHOULD HAVE ALSO FOLLOWED THE PROCEDURES. IT IS GOOD THAT THEY ARE NOW DOING SO. THERE IS A FUTURE IN A DIVERSIFIED ECONOMY. THERE HAVE BEEN A NUMBER OF PUBLIC MEETINGS WITH SOME INPUT. THE OUTCOME FROM THOSE MEETINGS WAS A DESIRE TO STAY BELOW 6500 SOUTH. THEY HAVE FOLLOWED THE PUBLIC PROCESS BUT ALSO UNDERSTAND THERE IS MORE THEY CAN DO TO INFORM THE PUBLIC.

GINGER BOWDEN, VERNAL BREWING COMPANY AND PARADIGM CONSULTING, ADDRESSED THE MEETING. SHE WAS GOING TO ADDRESS THE ENVIRONMENTAL ASSESSMENT (EA) BUT IT IS 300 PAGES AND IT WOULD TAKE TOO LONG. SHE DID NOT KNOW UNTIL THIS MEETING THAT THE WEST PHASE WOULD BE TABLED. THE EA DOES NOT CONSIDER PRIVATE PROPERTY. HOWEVER, THE SAME ISSUES WILL BE THERE TOO. SHE WANTED TO KNOW HOW THE ISSUES WITH MITIGATION ON PRIVATE PROPERTIES WOULD BE ADDRESSED. IT IS A LARGE IMPACT AND THE COMMUNITY NEEDS TO KNOW. THERE IS MORE TO THE EA THAN MEETS THE EYE.

THE COMMISSIONERS RESPONDED. PHASE 1 AND 2 ARE BOTH BEING LOOKED AT. PHASE 1, EAST SIDE, IS PRIVATE PROPERTY OR SITLA. NONE OF THAT IS BLM SO IT IS EXCLUDED FROM THE BLM. THE ENGINEERING FIRM IS WORKING ON SUCH ISSUES. COMMISSIONER RAYMOND WILL TALK TO TROY OSTLER, CIVCO ENGINEERING, TO ASK ABOUT SUCH MITIGATION.

ADAM MASSEY ALSO ADDRESSED HER COMMENTS. THE TRANSPORTATION SSD WILL DO AN OPEN HOUSE WITH THOSE AFFECTED PROPERTY OWNERS TO ADDRESS THE ISSUES. CIVCO ENGINEERING IS DOING A GREAT JOB. THE MINERAL LEASE FUNDS BEING USED FOR THE EAST PHASE ARE NOT JUST PUBLIC FUNDS TO BE SPENT IN ANY WAY. THEY MUST BE SPENT SPECIFICALLY. THE GUIDELINES MAY NOT ALWAYS BE CORRECT OR CONVENIENT BUT THEY DO HAVE TO BE FOLLOWED.

SUSAN HORROCKS THANKED THE COMMISSIONERS FOR HOLDING A MEETING TO ALLOW EVERYONE TO SPEAK. SHE HAD A FEW QUESTIONS. SHE IS CONCERNED THE VALLEY CANNOT AFFORD THE ECONOMIC LOSS OF THE PROPOSED ROUTE AND WONDERED IF AN ECONOMIC STUDY HAS BEEN DONE REGARDING THE IMPACTS. SHE HAS SPOKEN WITH ROOSEVELT AND DUCHESNE THEY WOULD LOVE TO GET THE MONEY THAT WON'T BE SPENT HERE BECAUSE OF THE ENERGY ROUTE. THE CIB APPROVED THE FUNDS WHEN OIL WAS OVER \$100 A BARREL AND NOW ITS \$40. IT'S EASY TO TELL THE CITIZENS NOT TO WORRY EVERYTHING WILL BE OKAY BUT WE DON'T WANT THAT. WE WANT TO

KNOW THE FACTS AND THE FIGURES. SHE WANTS TO KNOW THE TERMS OF THE REPAYMENT AND THE ACTUAL BUDGET. WHAT ARE THE PROJECTED MAINTENANCE COSTS? THIS IS THE FIRST DEVELOPMENT IN VERNAL SHE HAS BEEN OPPOSED TO.

COMMISSIONER MCKEE IS A MEMBER OF THE CIB. THE APPLICATION FOR THE EAST PHASE WAS \$20 MILLION. \$4 MILLION WOULD COME FROM THE TRANSPORTATION SSD, \$12 MILLION IN GRANT AND \$4 MILLION IN LOAN. IT WASN'T ALL FUNDED. INSTEAD WE RECEIVED A \$6 MILLION LOAN, WHICH HAS BEEN APPROVED, \$8 MILLION GRANT AND \$4 MILLION IN MATCH MONEY. THE ENGINEERS HAD ESTIMATED \$18 MILLION BUT THE ESTIMATE HAS BEEN REVISED TO \$15 MILLION. PRICES HAVE COME DOWN. THE MONEY CAN ONLY BE GIVEN BACK THROUGH PROJECTS BUT NOT TO ANOTHER ORGANIZATION. THE FUNDS COULD BE GIVEN BACK TO THE CIB. THEY WOULD BE GIVEN OUT FOR OTHER PROJECTS. WE COULD REAPPLY AND HOPE TO GET THE FUNDS, OR PART OF THEM. IT IS TRUE THE CONSTRUCTION OF THE EAST PHASE WILL NOT COST THE COUNTY BUT THE MAINTENANCE WILL. THE GENERAL MAINTENANCE WILL BECOME A COUNTY RESPONSIBILITY AND WILL BE ADDED TO THE CLASS B ROAD LIST AND WE WILL RECEIVE SOME FUNDS TO HELP PAY THE COST OF MAINTENANCE. THE ROAD REQUIREMENTS WILL HAVE TO BE PRIORITIZED. COMMISSIONER STRINGER ADDED THE LOSS OF OPPORTUNITY IF WE DISTURB MCCOY FLATS HAS TO BE CONSIDERED. THESE ISSUES ARE NOT PART OF THE BLM STUDY. WE MUST NOT MISS ANY DETAILS. COMMISSIONER MCKEE ASKED IF THE ECONOMIC STUDY SHOULD BE DONE NOW OR WAIT UNTIL THERE IS AN ACTIVE PLAN TO MOVE FORWARD. IF IT IS DONE NOW IT MAY BE IRRELEVANT LATER. THE NEED FOR PHASE 1 IS SIGNIFICANT FOR THE RESIDENTS IN THAT AREA.

DAN DILSAVER, A SMALL BUSINESS OWNER FOR 40 YEARS, EXPRESSED HIS FRUSTRATION. HE HAS SPOKEN WITH VERY FEW PEOPLE WHO FEEL THE ROUTE IS NEEDED. HE HAS BEEN TO MANY MEETINGS AND ASKED FOR SPECIFIC DATA. HE ASKED THE TRANSPORTATION SSD FOR A TRAFFIC FLOW STUDY ON HIGHWAY 191 VS HIGHWAY 40. HE NEVER RECEIVED THE INFORMATION. HE HAS SPOKEN WITH OTHERS AND CONFIRMED THERE IS MORE TRAFFIC ALONG 191 THAN 40. THIS ENERGY ROUTE WILL NOT ADDRESS THE MAJORITY OF THE TRAFFIC. HE SUGGESTED THE COMMISSIONERS HIRE A PUBLIC RELATIONS FIRM. THIS IS THE FIRST OPEN MICROPHONE MEETING HE HAS KNOWN ABOUT IN REGARDS TO THIS PROJECT. AN ECONOMIC STUDY ISN'T NEEDED TO SHOW MONEY WILL BE TAKEN AWAY FROM MAIN STREET. WITHOUT SUPPORTIVE DATA IT'S JUST SOMEONE'S GOOD IDEA. HE SUGGESTED THE COUNTY INFORM MORE CITIZENS BY SENDING NOTICES WITH TAX NOTICES AND OTHER MAILINGS. IT WOULD ALSO BE BENEFICIAL TO DIRECTLY CONTACT BUSINESS OWNERS.

BRAD HORROCKS, OWNER OF B&D RV, ADDRESSED THE MEETING. HE HAS BEEN IN BUSINESS ABOUT 40 YEARS. HE DOESN'T FEEL THE COMMUNITY IS GROWING. BUSINESSES ARE BEING LOST. PROPERTY TAXES HAVE INCREASED ON HIS BUSINESS. HE CAN'T AFFORD THIS FREE MONEY TO DO PROJECTS. HE DOESN'T SEE WHY THE ROUTE IS NEEDED. CRAIG, COLORADO IS A GREAT EXAMPLE. THEIR BYPASS ROUTE IS NOT MARKED BUT HAS MADE A GREAT IMPACT. HE DOESN'T LIKE TO BE NOTIFIED AFTER THE FACT. HE UNDERSTANDS THE WESTERN PHASE HAS BEEN TABLED BUT MORE STUDIES SHOULD BE DONE ON THE EAST PHASE.

REBECCA BOREN, OWNER OF LITTLE B'S, ADDRESSED HER CONCERNS. ACCORDING TO A FOREST SERVICE BIOLOGIST, THE BLM WILL MOST LIKELY APPROVE THE ROUTE EVEN THOUGH THEY WOULD NOT APPROVE A FENCE IN THE MCCOY FLATS FOR THE DELICATE WILDLIFE HABITAT. THEY APPLIED TO EXTEND A TRAIL AND COULDN'T BECAUSE OF THE HABITAT. ACCORDING TO THE RADIO, 40% OF THE TRAFFIC WOULD BE DIVERTED AROUND VERNAL, NOT JUST HEAVY TRUCK TRAFFIC. SHE UNDERSTANDS THE COUNTY OWNS 75% OF THE AIRPORT AND VERNAL OWNS 25%. IT HAS BEEN SUGGESTED TO TURN THE AIRPORT OVER TO THE TRANSPORTATION SSD. VERNAL CITY WILL ALLOCATE FUNDS TO THE CONFERENCE CENTER RATHER THAN THE AIRPORT. TRANSPARENCY IS A MAJOR CONCERN.

IT IS CLEAR THE AIRPORT NEEDS SOME CLARIFICATION. FOR MANY YEARS IT HAS BEEN SAID SOMETHING HAS TO BE DONE WITH THE AIRPORT. VERNAL CITY, NAPLES CITY, AND THE COUNTY SUPPORTED MOVING THE AIRPORT TO SUNSHINE BENCH. HOWEVER, FAA WOULD NOT SUPPORT IT. WE WOULD HAVE HAD TO PAY 80% OF THE COST AND THE ENVIRONMENTAL ISSUES WOULD HAVE BEEN A NIGHTMARE. THE DECISION WAS MADE TO LEAVE THE AIRPORT WHERE IT IS. REBECCA ASKED WHY A HALF MILLION DOLLARS IS BEING SPENT ON THE CONFERENCE CENTER WHEN IT SHOULD HAVE BEEN USED AT THE AIRPORT. COMMISSIONER RAYMOND NOTED THE MONEY VERNAL CITY IS WILLING TO PUT TOWARDS THE CONFERENCE CENTER HAS NOT HAPPENED YET. VERNAL CITY IS NOT PREPARED TO MAKE THE CONTRIBUTION TO THE CONFERENCE CENTER UNTIL THE AGREEMENTS WITH THE TRANSPORTATION SSD ARE COMPLETED? THERE ARE SEVERAL REASONS WHY THE LOCATION FOR THE CONFERENCE CENTER WAS LOCATED. ONE IS BECAUSE OF THE POSITIVE IMPACT ON BUSINESSES IN DOWNTOWN VERNAL. IT WAS MEANT TO REVITALIZE VERNAL. SO FAR IT IS WORKING REALLY WELL WITH WESTERN PARK AND WE ARE EXCITED ABOUT THE EVENTS BEING SCHEDULED. THERE ARE MANY REASONS WHY THEY HAVE CHOSEN TO MOVE FORWARD WITH THE IMPROVEMENTS AT THE AIRPORT, BUT THE BIGGEST REASON IS TO LAND A JET. WE HAVE TO HAVE A DECENT RUNWAY AND A TERMINAL BUILDING TO FACILITATE PASSENGERS. OUR TERMINAL IS OVER 20 YEARS OLD. IT DOES NOT MEET TSA REQUIREMENTS AND THEY WILL PULL THE CERTIFICATION. WE HAD TO DECIDE WHETHER TO THROW MONEY AT THE OLD FACILITY OR BUILD A BETTER ONE. WE WANT TO ENCOURAGE THE GROWTH OF ENPLANEMENTS AND ALLOW TRAVEL AND TOURISM TO UTILIZE THE FACILITY.

COMMISSIONER MCKEE BELIEVES IN THE FUTURE OF VERNAL. WE HAVE 111 TRILLION CUBIC FEET OF NATURAL GAS AND BILLIONS OF CONVENTIONAL OIL AND UNCONVENTIONAL OIL. HOWEVER, WE NEED TO BE MORE THAN ENERGY RELATED. OUR RESOURCES ARE UNMATCHED ANYWHERE. THE PUBLIC LANDS INITIATIVE WILL HELP TO WORK THROUGH THE FEDERAL BUREAUCRACY. IT WON'T SOLVE EVERYTHING BUT WILL HELP SUPPORT RECREATION, AGRICULTURE, AND EXTRACTION.

JEN CALLANTINE, DINOSAUR RIVER EXPEDITIONS, ADDRESSED THE MEETING. NEVER PUT ALL YOUR EGGS IN ONE BASKET. TOURISM IS IMPORTANT TO OUR COMMUNITY. THE LACK OF AIR SERVICE HAS BEEN A PROBLEM. SMALL BUSINESSES ARE GROWING AND TRYING TO BE MORE PERTINENT. SHE IS CONCERNED FOR DOWNTOWN VERNAL. SHE IS CONCERNED THE ROUTE WOULD BE ZONED COMMERCIAL, BOTH PHASES.

THE COMMISSIONERS COULD NOT GUARANTEE THE ZONING WOULD NOT BE CHANGED TO COMMERCIAL. THEY ONLY HAVE CONTROL OVER PRIVATE PROPERTIES AND THERE IS A PUBLIC PROCESS TO FOLLOW. BLM AND SITLA WOULD BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THE ZONING ON THEIR OWN PROPERTIES. COMMUNITY LEADERS MUST BE FLEXIBLE AND ROLL WITH THE PUNCHES. JEN ASKED HOW TRAVELERS WOULD BE ENCOURAGED TO COME INTO TOWN.

ANNA BILLINGS ADDRESSED THE MEETING REPRESENTING LEDGESTONE HOTEL. SHE ASKED WHERE THEY WERE IN THE PROCESS OF PHASE 1. THE CHAMBER OF LUNCHEON TWO MONTHS AGO WAS HER FIRST EXPERIENCE WITH THIS PROJECT. THEY HAVE NOT BEEN ABLE TO RECEIVE ENOUGH INFORMATION FROM ANY OF THE MEETINGS. SHE FEELS THE COMMUNITY HAS NOT RECEIVED ENOUGH INFORMATION. MANY ARE NOT AWARE OF WHAT IS GOING ON.

SOMEONE IN THE AUDIENCE ASKED IF THIS COULD BE PLACED ON THE BALLOT TO BE VOTED ON. TERESA OF ANUVIEW AUTO ADDRESSED THE MEETING. THEY MOVED HERE FROM DRAPER 15 YEARS AGO BECAUSE BANGERTE HIGHWAY WAS PUT IN TWO HOUSES AWAY. THEY HAD BEEN TOLD THE RIGHT OF WAY WAS FOR FUTURE USE. TWO YEARS LATER, IT WAS COMPLETE. A CHILD HAS BEEN KILLED ON BANGERTE. SHE IS UNCOMFORTABLE EVEN WITH TABLING THIS PROJECT. BUSINESSES WILL SUFFER. BUSINESS OWNERS AND HOME OWNERS MUST HAVE A VOICE.

GREG GILROY ADDRESSED THE MEETING. HE HAS TRIED TO BE OBJECTIVE. COMMISSIONER MCKEE HAS MADE A GREAT POINT. WHERE DOES THE COUNTY GO FROM HERE. EVEN GRANT MONEY IS NOT

FREE MONEY, IT STILL CAME FROM TAXES. IT DOESN'T MATTER WHERE THE MONEY COMES FROM, IF IT DOESN'T MAKE SENSE, DON'T DO IT. TIMES HAVE CHANGED AND PEOPLE WANT TO KNOW WHAT IS GOING ON IN THE GOVERNMENT AND HOW THEIR TAX DOLLARS ARE BEING SPENT. HE ASKED THE COMMISSION TO MAKE GOOD DECISIONS AND DO WHAT IS RIGHT.

JESSIE ATWOOD ALSO ADDRESSED THE MEETING. HE HAS HEARD ABOUT THIS PROJECT THROUGH RUMORS. THIS MEETING HAS BEEN VERY HELPFUL AND PROVIDED SOME ACTUAL INFORMATION. HE IS CONCERNED WITH THE RIGHT OF WAY THROUGH MCCOY FLATS. HE IS HEAD COACH OF THE HIGH SCHOOL MOUNTAIN BIKING CLUB. THEY HAVE BEEN DOING VERY WELL AND THE CLUB GROWS EVERY YEAR. THEY HAVE HAD A PRACTICE AT MCCOY FLATS RECENTLY WITH 15 TEENAGERS AND PARENTS AND COACHES. IT WOULD BE A MISTAKE TO PUT THE RIGHT OF WAY THROUGH MCCOY FLATS. FUTURE PLANNING IS IMPORTANT FOR THE COUNTY TO DO. HE ASKED IF THE RIGHT OF WAY COULD BE MOVED IF SO DECIDED IN THE FUTURE. HE ALSO ASKED IF THE EAST PHASE WAS READY TO MOVE FORWARD TOMORROW. HE ALSO ASKED WHERE THE \$6 MILLION DOLLAR LOAN CAME FROM AND WHERE WE PAY IT BACK.

THE RIGHT OF WAY FROM THE BLM IS AUTHORIZED BY A TITLE V OR ENABLING ACT. THESE ARE TYPICALLY ISSUED FOR A TERM. IT CAN BE RELINQUISHED OR IF NOT USED AT THE END OF THE TERM, IT CAN BE REVOKED. SOME HAVE FIVE YEAR REVIEWS AND SOME 20. IF SOMETHING ON THE GROUND CHANGES, LIKE THE LISTING OF SAGE GROUSE, THE RIGHT OF WAY WOULD BE SUBJECT TO NEW CONDITIONS BASED ON THE SITUATION. A RIGHT OF WAY MUST BE USED FOR WHAT IT WAS REQUESTED FOR, NOT CHANGED MIDSTREAM.

ASSUMING EVERYTHING WAS PERFECT; CONSTRUCTION ON THE EAST PHASE COULD BEGIN LATE THIS FALL OR IN THE SPRING. THE TRANSPORTATION SSD WILL BE PAYING BACK THE \$6 MILLION OVER A 15 YEAR TERM, WHICH IS \$450,000 PER YEAR. THIS PAYMENT IS WITH MINERAL LEASE FUNDS. MINERAL LEASE FUNDS ARE TAXES FROM OIL AND GAS COMPANIES. THERE IS A ROYALTY WHEN THEY DRILL THAT GOES TO THE FEDERAL GOVERNMENT. 49% OF THAT ROYALTY GOES BACK TO THE STATE OF UTAH. 40% OF THAT GOES TO THE SPECIAL SERVICE DISTRICTS. LAST YEAR WE RECEIVED \$36 MILLION. IT HAS TO BE SPENT. BUDGETS HAVE HAD TO BE REWRITTEN THIS YEAR DUE TO THE LOSS OF MINERAL LEASE FUNDS. FUNDS HAVE DROPPED BY ABOUT HALF. THE TRANSPORTATION SSD IS MAKING PAYMENTS FOR SEEP RIDGE ROAD SO A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF THEIR DWINDLING BUDGET IS ALLOCATED. THE SPECIAL SERVICE DISTRICTS MUST RECEIVE ENOUGH FUNDING TO MEET THEIR DEBT OBLIGATIONS AS PER AGREEMENT. IF SOMETHING WERE TO HAPPEN AND THE DEBT COULD NOT BE PAID THE CIB MAY BE REQUESTED TO FORGIVE THE LOAN OR EXTEND IT. THERE WERE 45 RIGS RUNNING WHEN THE ROUTE WAS PROPOSED AND NOW WE HAVE THREE. HOWEVER, THE RIGS ARE FOR EXPLORATION, THEY ARE INDICATIVE OF PRODUCTION, THOUGH PRODUCTION HAS DECREASED. THE COUNTY MUST BE CONSERVATIVE AND IS CUTTING BACK.

REBECCA BOREN THANKED THE COMMISSIONERS FOR HEARING THE PUBLIC. SHE IS GLAD IT HAS BEEN TABLED BUT WOULD LIKE TO SEE THE RIGHT OF WAY PROPOSALS RESCINDED. SOMEONE ELSE ASKED WHEN THE EAST PHASE WAS GOING TO BE BUILT IF THE WEST IS BEING POSTPONED.

COMMISSIONER RAYMOND RESPONDED. THIS IS AN ALTERNATE TRUCK ROUTE THAT CAN STAND ON IT'S OWN. IT WILL ROUTE COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL TRAFFIC FROM THE INDUSTRIAL PARK TO STATE ROAD 45, 4.52 MILES. STATE ROAD 45 IS THE ONLY PAVED ACCESS TO THE SOUTHEASTERN PORTION OF THE COUNTY. THIS PORTION OF THE COUNTY HAS A LOT OF PRODUCTION AND GILSONITE. THIS ROUTE WILL ALLOW DRIVERS TO REFRAIN FROM TRAVELING BACK UP HIGHWAY 40 AND TAKING 1500 EAST SOUTH. THIS WILL KEEP THEM OUT OF RESIDENTIAL AREAS AND WILL BE A FASTER ROUTE. IT HAS BEEN SUGGESTED TO LIMIT TRUCK TRAFFIC AND ADD MORE PATROLS ALONG 1500 EAST AND THOSE SUGGESTIONS WILL BE SERIOUSLY CONSIDERED.

MAYOR SONJA NORTON ALSO ADDRESSED THE MEETING. THERE IS CONCERN WITH COMMERCIAL AND RETAIL DEVELOPMENT. SHE ASKED IF IT WOULD BE POSSIBLE TO LABEL IT AS A HAZARDOUS MATERIALS ROUTE TO DISCOURAGE REGULAR TRAVELERS. VERNAL CITY HAS SEEN A DECLINE OF ABOUT 25% IN SALES TAX REVENUE. SHE WOULD LIKE TO SEE FURTHER DISCUSSION ON THE PROPOSED ROUTE. SHE WOULD ALSO LIKE TO SEE WHAT PROTECTION WE WOULD HAVE TO KEEP THE STATE FROM ADOPTING THE BYPASS AS A STATE HIGHWAY.

THE COMMISSIONERS NOTED IT HAS BEEN SUGGESTED TO CALL IT A HAZARDOUS MATERIALS ROUTE. THE TRANSPORTATION SSD IS CALLING IT THE ASHLEY VALLEY ENERGY ROUTE. PEOPLE IN VERNAL KNOW WHAT IT IS AND TOURISTS WON'T WANT TO TAKE IT. COMMISSIONER RAYMOND ASKED IF THERE WAS ANYONE IN FAVOR OF THE ROUTE.

TERRY KIEVER ADDRESSED THE MEETING IN FAVOR. HE LIVES ON 1500 EAST. THE COMMERCIAL AND INDUSTRIAL TRUCK TRAFFIC IS DANGEROUS. THIS TRAFFIC USES THE ROAD ABOUT THE SAME TIME KIDS ARE GETTING ON THE BUS. HE HAS CALLED HIGHWAY PATROL NUMEROUS TIMES. THE SHERIFF DEPARTMENT DOESN'T HAVE ENOUGH MANPOWER TO HANDLE THE EXTRA. EVERY TOWN AND CITY HAS TO GROW BUT THE TRAFFIC CAN'T RUN THROUGH THE MIDDLE OF TOWN FOREVER IF WE WANT THAT GROWTH. THE LONGER IT IS PUT OFF THE WORSE IT GETS. IT APPEARS TO HIM, WHEN THINGS ARE PLANNED IT STEPS ON SOMEONE'S TOES AND NO ONE IS WILLING TO WORK TOGETHER. HE'S NOT CONVINCED IT WOULD TAKE BUSINESS OUT OF DOWNTOWN. SOMETHING HAS TO BE DONE WITH THE TRAFFIC ON 1500 EAST.

CARMA SLAUGH ADDRESSED THE MEETING. SHE WORKS IN TWO HOTELS. SHE REMEMBERS DRIVING THE TRACTOR TO TOWN TO GAS UP AS A KID. MOST PEOPLE COMING INTO VERNAL DO NOT MAKE RESERVATIONS. THEY DECIDE TO STOP AS THEY DRIVE THROUGH. VISITORS LOVE THE FLOWERS. THEY WOULDN'T SEE THE FLOWERS OR THE MUSEUMS IF THEY TAKE THE BYPASS ROUTE. SHE UNDERSTANDS THE NEED FOR THE AIRPORT. SHE IS CONCERNED ABOUT THE NEW SCHOOLS WHEN POPULATIONS ARE DECREASING. SHE IS ANGRY WE ARE DESTROYING OUR OWN LIVELIHOOD BY PUTTING IN A BYPASS. VERNAL IS DYING AND WE WILL BE STUCK PAYING THE BILLS.

RACHELLE BRISTOL AGREED WITH CARMA, SHE WORKS IN A HOTEL TOO. PEOPLE STOP IN VERNAL ON THEIR WAY THROUGH TO OTHER CITIES. A GPS WOULD SHOW THE BYPASS ROUTE AS A FASTER WAY. MANY PEOPLE ASK THE FRONT DESKS WHAT THEY CAN DO AND WHERE TO EAT. 1500 EAST IS A SAFETY CONCERN. THIS BECOMES A HARD DECISION BUT WE CANNOT PUT ALL OUR EGGS IN ONE BASKET. VERNAL HAS TO GROW AND WE HAVE TO TEACH OUR CHILDREN WORK ETHICS. IN RESPONSE TO HER QUESTION, TROY LUPCHO INDICATED THEY HAVE BEEN BUILDING TRAILS IN MCCOY FLATS FOR 20 YEARS AND THE BLM DID AN INVENTORY OF TRAILS ABOUT 7 YEARS AGO. SHE ASKED THE COMMISSIONERS TO USE THE DISNEY MOVIE "CARS" AS AN EXAMPLE.

ORLAN ANDERSON ADDRESSED THE MEETING. THE COMMISSIONERS HAVE TAKEN A BEATING, ESPECIALLY REGARDING TRANSPARENCY. THE TRUCKING COMPANY HE IS ASSOCIATED WITH HAS FORBIDDEN DRIVERS FROM TRAVELING THROUGH RESIDENTIAL AREAS. THE EAST PHASE WOULD BE CONVENIENT BUT IT MAY BE WISE TO POSTPONE IT AS WELL. AS A BUSINESS IT IS NOT AFFORDABLE. HE IS SUPPORTIVE OF THE NON MOTORIZED AND BIKING COMMUNITY. IT IS QUITE A PROCESS GETTING A TRAIL ON PUBLIC LANDS. EVEN THE INDUSTRY IN OUR AREA WANTS A DIVERSE ECONOMY.

BRENT GILLEY ALSO ADDRESSED THE MEETING. HE HAS HAD SEVERAL BUSINESSES, SOME SUCCESSFUL AND SOME NOT. THROUGH SELF EMPLOYMENT, HE HAS BEEN IN CHARGE OF HIS DESTINY. HE ENCOURAGED THE COMMISSIONERS TO CONSIDER WHAT AN INDIVIDUAL BUSINESS PERSON WOULD DO. THIS MAY NEED TO HAPPEN SOMEDAY. HE HAS BEEN INVOLVED FROM THE BEGINNING SO THIS IS NOT NEW TO HIM. HOWEVER, HE WAS SURPRISED AT THE STAGE THE PROJECT IS IN. WE SHOULD BE FOCUSING ON THE SURVIVAL OF OUR COMMUNITY RIGHT NOW. THE AIRPORT IS IMPORTANT TO OUR ECONOMY. DIVERTING TRAFFIC AWAY JUST DOESN'T MAKE SENSE.



UPGRADING 2500 SOUTH HAS BEEN A HUGE BENEFIT. MANY OTHER ROADS COULD USE IMPROVEMENTS. WE COULD IMPROVE INTERSECTIONS AND ACCESS FOR BUS DRIVERS, IMPROVE THE INFRASTRUCTURE WE ALREADY HAVE.

SOMEONE IN THE AUDIENCE SAID SHE UNDERSTOOD THE DINOSAUR NATIONAL MONUMENT TO A NATIONAL PARK. IT MAY NOT BE A GOOD IDEA TO PUT IN A BYPASS THAT WOULD ALLOW VISITORS TO SKIP VERNAL. SOMETHING MAY BE NEEDED TO GET FROM ONE END OF THE VALLEY TO THE OTHER BUT NOT THIS ROUTE.

JIM LEKAS TOOK A MOMENT TO REMIND EVERYONE THE COMMISSIONERS HAVE ASKED THE PLANNING COMMISSION TO REVIEW THE COUNTY TRAVEL PLAN. Its INTENTION IS TO PRIORITIZE WHICH TRAVEL PLANS MAKE GOOD SENSE AND PUT THAT LINE ON THE MAP SO DEVELOPMENT DOESN'T GO ON TOP OF IT AND IT CAN BE UTILIZED IN THE FUTURE.

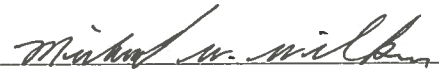
GARY SHOWALTER NOTED THIS HAS BEEN THE MOST PRODUCTIVE MEETING HE HAS EVER BEEN TO. THE CROWD HAS RESPONDED IN A GOOD MANNER AND HE COMMENDED THE COMMISSIONERS FOR TAKING THE TIME FOR THIS MEETING.

THE COMMISSIONERS THANKED EVERYONE FOR THEIR COOPERATION IN PUTTING THIS MEETING TOGETHER. AS ELECTED OFFICIALS THEY FEEL THEY ARE OUT OF STEP WITH THE COMMUNITY WANTS AND THEY WILL DO WHAT THEY CAN TO GET BACK TO IT. THEY HAVE HEARD THE CONCERNS AND WILL DO ALL THAT IS POSSIBLE TO ADDRESS ISSUES. TRANSPARENCY IS OBVIOUSLY A PROBLEM AND THEY WILL WORK HARDER ON THAT AS WELL. THIS IS A DIFFICULT TIME AND EVERYONE WILL NEED TO MAKE TOGETHER FOR THE BETTERMENT OF THE COMMUNITY.

**MEETING ADJOURNED AT 1:07 PM**



MICHAEL MCKEE, CHAIR



MICHAEL W. WILKINS, CLERK-AUDITOR